

Tiffield Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Address: High Street South, Tiffield, Northants, Towcester, Northamptonshire, NN12 8AB

Unique reference number (URN): 122031

Inspection report: 17 March 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that pupils are ready for the next stage of their education. Pupils achieve well and typically meet the standard expected of them in national tests for reading, writing and mathematics in Year 6. Younger pupils start learning to read quickly. Pupils develop a love of reading and gain a broad knowledge of literature. Pupils grow to be confident writers too. However, gaps in pupils' knowledge of early letter formation and spelling sometimes do not close as quickly as they should.

Throughout the school, pupils progress well through the curriculum. Thanks to the effective support provided, this includes pupils who have any barriers to their learning. Pupils can connect their current learning to what they learned before. They use pertinent vocabulary when they are talking about what they have learned. When activities and the checks staff make on pupils' learning are most effective, pupils produce high-quality and detailed work.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Most pupils attend well. Published attendance figures do not always reflect this, as individual absences can affect overall attendance figures disproportionately. Leaders work effectively with families to ensure good habits of attendance and punctuality. They monitor attendance closely and intervene quickly when absence rises. Leaders know and have supportive relationships with families, and they help them sensitively to make swift improvements and overcome barriers to regular attendance.

Leaders and staff have created a calm yet productive learning environment. Pupils get on immediately with their morning 'cool' activities when they arrive at school each day. They follow clear routines and work cooperatively, naturally supporting one another. Pupils have positive attitudes. Mostly, they develop skills of self-organisation and resilience. Pupils of all ages play happily together on the playground. Older pupils take care of younger pupils and all treat one another with respect. Staff support pupils well by teaching and applying the school's expectations and behaviour approaches consistently. If, for any reason, pupils find it hard to live up to the school's expectations, staff provide them with the right help. Staff ensure that unkind, bullying or discriminatory behaviour rarely occurs.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The curriculum is engaging, broad and ambitious. It sets out the important subject content that pupils need to learn. Leaders have taken extra care to sequence this knowledge logically to suit the mixed-age classes. They support staff to skilfully organise lessons to ensure that pupils learn the knowledge expected for their year group.

Leaders and staff ensure that pupils learn to read and write well and develop secure foundational knowledge in mathematics. When pupils fall behind, for example with phonics or their understanding of numbers, staff provide effective extra support that helps them catch up. Staff mostly teach the curriculum well, generally making suitable adaptations to cater for the differing needs of pupils. Over time, staff build well on what pupils know. They revisit

learning regularly to help pupils remember what they have learned. On the whole, staff check pupils' understanding effectively.

Sometimes, however, the activities staff provide do not match what they intend pupils to learn, and the resources they provide are not suitable in helping them to complete activities. There are inconsistencies in the way staff address errors in pupils' work, including inaccurate letter formation and spelling. Leaders are strengthening staff expertise in checking pupils' understanding and addressing their misconceptions quickly.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that children make a positive start to their education. They have a secure understanding of how the early years curriculum provides the foundations for later learning. Leaders recently revised the curriculum and provided staff with further training to strengthen teaching. They ensure that the environment is suitably resourced to enable children to learn well through play and high-quality interactions with staff. Largely, this enables children to develop their understanding across the curriculum, although recent improvements in the way staff interact and engage children suitably in activities are not embedded fully.

Staff teach children phonics and how to write effectively. Any children at risk of falling behind in any area of learning receive the right help to catch up quickly. Staff adapt activities to ensure that children gain further practice, such as extra cutting activities to support their physical development. Additionally, children benefit from learning alongside and interacting with their key stage 1 peers.

Staff get to know children well. They identify any barriers to learning and provide effective support for those who need it. Their close working relationships with parents and carers help with this. Parents value receiving regular information to help them understand how to support their children's learning at home.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

A deeply inclusive ethos is woven through the core of the school's work. Leaders and staff are ambitious for every pupil, including those with additional needs or barriers to learning. The school is particularly welcoming and supportive of pupils who have experienced instability in their education.

Leaders check carefully whether pupils have any additional needs as soon as they join the school. They act quickly and determinedly to put the right support in place. Leaders work closely with parents and carers, considering their views and knowledge to shape the support pupils receive. Leaders draw on expertise from a range of external agencies to ensure that staff are suitably equipped to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They ensure that staff receive training to develop their expertise in making adaptations for these pupils. Leaders use additional funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. Consequently, staff typically provide the tailored support that pupils need to reduce any barriers to learning and wellbeing they face.

Leaders maintain clear oversight of the provision for all groups of pupils. They track pupils' progress regularly to check the impact of their actions and the support provided. Leaders

and staff review and adapt their strategies accordingly.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders are deeply committed to ensuring that every pupil benefits from a high-quality education so they can thrive. Leaders' vision is rooted in a thorough understanding of the school and the community it serves. Leaders focus on the right areas to continually drive school improvement.

Governors fulfil their responsibilities and have clear strategic oversight of the school's work. They are sufficiently well informed to maintain an astute understanding of the school. Governors provide effective challenge and support, holding leaders to account for key aspects of their work. They consider the impact leaders' decisions have on pupils, ensuring that they and leaders always act in pupils' best interests.

Being part of a federation enables leaders to provide a high-quality programme of professional learning. Staff benefit from sharing expertise and working collaboratively with colleagues across schools. Leaders further broaden professional development opportunities by working with a wider local network of schools and organisations. As a result, staff develop the expertise to carry out their roles confidently and effectively.

Leaders care greatly for the individual wellbeing of staff. Staff say working at the school is like being in a family. Leaders are considerate of staff workload when developing their policies and approaches. They forge positive relationships throughout the school community and value the engagement of parents and carers. Leaders' communication with parents is open, honest and mutually supportive. Parents are unanimous in their appreciation of the education and care their children receive.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The well-considered personal development programme prepares pupils effectively for their future lives. Cultural experiences and visits support pupils to learn the curriculum and provide insights into modern life. Pupils visit London to learn about the monarchy. They talk knowledgeably about different faiths found in wider British society. Visits to different religious buildings, such as a gurdwara, help pupils relate other religious practices to their own lives. Pupils take on leadership roles, such as prefects, which help them to develop responsibility and teamwork. The school council organises charity events, while the 'playground squad' helps with activities at playtimes.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe, including when online. They are aware of age restrictions and setting limits on screen time. Staff teach relationships and health education in an age-appropriate way. Pupils learn about managing friendships. They know that families come in many shapes and sizes. Pupils build a secure sense of moral responsibility. They know they should treat people fairly, while making allowances for individual needs. Pupils develop their understanding and respect of fundamental British values. For example, they can relate democracy to world events and talk about democratic countries. Sometimes, pupils find it hard to talk about other British values with the same level of detail.

Extra-curricular clubs spark pupils' interests and further their talents. Pupils enjoy sports, arts and crafts, LEGO and book club. Leaders ensure that all pupils benefit from the personal development offer. They consider pupils' views and interests when organising clubs and provide financial support for pupils to take part when needed. All pupils participate in trips and residential visits.

Pastoral support is a real strength of the school. Pupils learn about positive mental health and strategies to support their resilience. Pupils know how to seek help, and trained staff provide bespoke support when needed.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Every pupil feels welcomed and included at Tiffield. Some pupils have experienced instability in their education before joining, but they soon feel secure here. They grow to love being at school and generally attend well as a result. Most pupils speak appreciatively of how they benefit from attending a small school. They feel everyone knows them well, like being in a family. Staff take the time to get to know each pupil's unique characteristics. They respond quickly with tailored support when pupils have any additional needs. In some ways, school feels like home for pupils. Staff are always ready to listen if pupils have a problem or worry.

Pupils behave well, consistently following the school's routines and expectations. They develop enthusiastic and responsible attitudes towards their learning. They treat others with respect. Poor or unkind behaviour, including bullying, is rare.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils' academic achievement. Pupils speak about learning lots of interesting things. They achieve well, developing a secure understanding of the inspiring curriculum over time. Overall, pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education and for life beyond Tiffield.

Being part of the federation's family of schools means pupils benefit from the advantages of a larger school community, while retaining the strengths of their smaller setting. They truly get the best of both worlds. Leaders work strategically to ensure that all pupils access a broad range of enriching opportunities and experiences. For example, pupils join their peers from other federation schools for trips, including residentials, that develop their confidence and resilience. They participate in 'federation days', sporting events and forest school sessions across the different school sites. As a result, pupils form friendships with others from a range of cultures and backgrounds. They feel the benefits of these relationships when they move on to secondary school.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that learning activities, including supporting resources, enable pupils consistently to develop secure and detailed knowledge across the curriculum.

- Leaders should ensure that staff address misconceptions and gaps in pupils' knowledge systematically.
 - Leaders should further develop staff's expertise so that interactions with children in the early years are consistently effective.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Dan Lister.

The school is part of a federation called The Forest CE Federation.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the executive headteacher and other school leaders during the inspection. The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The school's most recent section 48 inspection was in September 2023.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Executive headteacher: Eliza Hollis

Lead inspector:

Claire Stylianides, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Ann Davey, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 17 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

43

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

56

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

11.63%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

0.00%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

13.95%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	68%	61%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	70%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	75%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	77%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	90%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	75%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	S	73%	S

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	73%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	80%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	75%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	S	71%	S

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	91%	73%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	90%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	88%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	S	73%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		46%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23		44%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		62%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23		60%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		59%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23		58%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		60%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23		59%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		68%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23		66%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23		78%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		78%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23		77%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23		79%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been

mirrored and applied in the report card.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	12.1%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	5.6%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	3.8%	5.9%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	30.0%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	11.6%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	2.4%	16.2%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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